

the sight of the pitiful state the soul of her father was in, she melted into tears; she cast herself down at the feet of her Heavenly Spouse, and begged Him, through His precious Blood, to free her father from his excruciating sufferings. She also begged St. Catharine to intercede for him, and then turning to our Lord, she said: "Charge me, O Lord, with my father's indebtedness to Thy justice. In expiation of it I am ready to take upon myself all the afflictions Thou art pleased to impose upon me." Our Lord graciously accepted this act of heroic charity, and released at once her father's soul from Purgatory. But how heavy the crosses were, which she, from that time, had to suffer, may be more easily imagined than described. This pious * sister seemed to have good reason to believe that her father's soul was in Paradise, yet she was mistaken. Alas, how many are there who resemble her? How many are there, whose hope as to the condition of their deceased friends is far more vain and false than that of this sister, because they pray much less for the souls of their departed friends than she did for her father.

"No defiled thing," says St. John, "shall enter the heavenly City of Jerusalem." How easy was it not for the departed soul to defile itself in this life, where it was surrounded by all kinds of snares and dangers.

St. Severinus, Archbishop of Cologne, was a prelate of great sanctity, so much so, that God wrought through him many miracles. One day, after his death, he was seen by a canon of the Cathedral to suffer the most excruciating pains. Upon being asked why he suffered so much, he who on account of his holiness of life, ought to be reigning gloriously in heaven. "I suffer this torment," he replied, "merely for having recited the canonical hours hurriedly and with wilful distraction."

It is related in the life of St. Mary

Magdalene de Pazzi, that one day she saw how the soul of one of her deceased sisters was kneeling in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament in the Church, all wrapped up in a mantle of fire, and suffering great pains, in expiation of her neglecting to go to Holy Communion on one day, when she had her confessor's permission to communicate.

If St. Severinus, so holy a prelate of the Church, if a holy nun, who spent her life in the convent, had to suffer most excruciating pains in Purgatory in expiation of small faults, what reason have you to imagine so easily that the souls of your departed friends are already enjoying the beatific vision of God—they, who, perhaps, made light of venial faults—who, perhaps, often spoke uncharitably of their neighbors—who, perhaps, neglected so many Holy Communions and other means of grace and sanctification—who, in their youth may have committed hundreds of secret mortal sins of the most heinous kinds, and may, perhaps, never have conceived for them any other than imperfect sorrow or attrition—they, who, perhaps, spent their whole life in the state of mortal sin, and were converted only on their deathbed.

Ah! how much combustible matter—how many imperfections, venial sins, and temporal punishments due to mortal and venial sins—do you think they took with them to be cancelled in the flames of Purgatory?

The venerable Bede relates, that it was revealed to Drithelm, a great servant of God, that the souls of those, who spent their whole lives in the state of mortal sin, and are converted only on their deathbed, are doomed to suffer the pains of Purgatory to the day of the last judgment.

In the life and revelations of St. Gertrude, we read that those who have committed many grievous sins, and who die without having done due penance, are not assisted by the ordinary suf-